

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This submission accompanies an RCE and serves as a response to the Final Office Action of January 5, 2007 issued in connection with the instant application. A Petition for Extension of Time (two months) and the fee therefor are submitted herewith.

Claims 7, 8, 10-12, 14, 21-24 and 27-30 are the claims currently pending in the present application. Claims 7, 8, 11, 12, 29, and 30 are amended to clarify features recited thereby.

The Amendment filed April 6, 2007 was fully responsive to the final Office Action mailed January 5, 2007. Further claim amendments are made to make even more clear various features recited in the claims. These amendments are fully supported by applicant's disclosure, see for example Specification, page 37, lines 2-15, and page 40, lines 2-13.

Further to the arguments set forth in the Amendment filed on April 6, 2007, applicant notes that independent claims 7, 11, and 29-30 now recite that "an acid solution having an etching effect" is supplied to the surface of the substrate in the second step and an alkaline solution is then applied to the surface of the substrate in the third step. Accordingly, after etching of the surface of the substrate by the acid solution, particles that have come up to the surface of the substrate due to the etching can then be removed by the impact of the alkaline solution droplets applied in the third step. Therefore, according to an aspect of applicant's invention, while suppressing the amount of etching of the surface of the substrate, extraneous particles are removed by the steps applied.

In view of the foregoing discussion, reconsideration of the rejections is respectfully requested and allowance of the claims of the application is believed to be warranted.

Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the application, allow the claims as amended and pass this case to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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